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fifty-fourth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Coordination questions: report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

(Item 4 (a))

Annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for 2013

1. At its 4th meeting, on 3 June 2014, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the annual overview report of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) for 2013 (E/2014/69).
2. The Director of CEB introduced the report and responded to questions raised during the Committee's consideration of it.

Discussion

3. Delegations welcomed the annual overview report of CEB for 2013 and recognized the importance of the role of the Board and its subsidiary bodies, especially as the international community continues to grapple with the aftermath of the global financial and economic crisis. Progress made by CEB in advancing coordination and coherence among the entities of the United Nations system across policy, management and operational matters was acknowledged.
4. Delegations emphasized the importance of ensuring that the work of CEB was guided by intergovernmental mandates. The coordination function of CEB was seen as essential by some delegations for improving the use of resources and maximizing their impact, as well as for avoiding duplication of work among United Nations



entities and for improving efficiency, effectiveness and the adaptability of the United Nations system.

5. The annual overview report was seen as an important contribution to improving CEB transparency and accountability. A number of delegations expressed satisfaction about the fact that the report provided detailed information on the wide range of activities carried out under CEB. Although several delegations acknowledged that there was a limit to the number of items that could usefully be covered, several issues that had not been reflected in the report were identified by delegations as important. In the light of mandates calling for United Nations system entities to mainstream South-South cooperation into country-level programming and to support projects implemented by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, a number of calls were made for CEB to address that topic. Other matters not covered by the report but of interest to delegations included the transformative role of technology, the coordination of United Nations system entities in countries in conflict or emerging from conflict, and non-communicable diseases. Delegations also sought clarification on the reason for singling out comprehensive sexuality education in the education of youth.

6. Delegations enquired about the mandate to mainstream the rule of law into the work of the United Nations and reaffirmed the importance of peace and security, development and human rights as key United Nations mandates.

7. Delegations recognized CEB efforts to promote system-wide preparation for and follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits. Clarification was sought on the nature of the "joint contributions" of CEB to conferences and summits. A number of delegations welcomed the CEB decision to hold a high-level side event at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States.

8. It was recalled that, at its previous session, the Committee had reaffirmed the importance of achieving the Millennium Development Goals and had welcomed the periodic review by CEB of their implementation at the country level. The view was expressed that coordinated action remained key to meeting the internationally agreed targets. Delegations voiced satisfaction that the CEB review of the implementation of the Goals had already begun to yield results, in particular with respect to the enhanced cooperation between the United Nations system and the World Bank Group. CEB was encouraged to continue its work to help Member States meet the Goals by 2015. A delegation sought reassurance that the CEB review did not duplicate action taken elsewhere. Another delegation requested more information on country-level bottlenecks and related solutions that had been identified in the reviews carried out to date. An enquiry was made as to whether CEB had reviewed progress towards the implementation of Goal 8 (global partnership for development).

9. Regarding the work of CEB in coordinating United Nations system-wide support in the preparation of the post-2015 development agenda, a query was raised about the High-level Committee on Programmes' review of the findings and recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda entitled *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development*. It was stressed that CEB should not attempt to prejudge the outcome of the intergovernmental debate on the post-2015 development agenda.

10. While reaffirming the importance of the coordination activities implemented by CEB as part of preparations for the post-2015 development agenda, serious concern was expressed about the decision of the United Nations system to support the key findings and recommendations of the above-mentioned report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. In that context, it was highlighted that the report had not been considered nor acted upon by the General Assembly.

11. Delegations were largely supportive of the efforts of CEB to promote policy coherence and coordination within the United Nations system, for example in the areas of international migration and development, youth and climate change. Delegations sought further information regarding the mandates associated with cybercrime and cybersecurity.

12. Delegations noted the CEB activities on human rights and several of them expressed support for CEB efforts to integrate that issue into the work of the Board, underscoring the need for policy coherence in that area. It was stressed that human rights was a universal issue and that it was not relevant only to developing countries. Several delegations sought clarification regarding any linkages between human rights commitments and development goals, as well as more information on the deployment by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) of human rights advisers to resident coordinator offices, including which country teams had received advisers and which countries had requested capacity-building assistance for the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council. One delegation asked for clarification on mainstreaming human rights. A question was asked about the dissemination of the UNDG publication *Mainstreaming Human Rights in Development: Stories from the Field*.

13. Questions were raised on the legislative basis for the deployment of human rights advisers to resident coordinator offices. In that regard, information was also requested on the legislative basis from the Human Rights Council and the United Nations Development Programme for such deployment. Strong opposition was expressed to any attempt to impose conditions on operational activities for development.

14. Regarding the work of CEB on enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of United Nations operational activities for development, the work of UNDG on standard operating procedures for United Nations country teams was commended for having improved efficiencies at the country level. An enquiry was made about the status of "Delivering as one" initiatives.

15. CEB efforts to improve United Nations system administrative and management functions, in particular in human resources management and in common treasury services and procurement, were appreciated by delegations. The Board was encouraged to continue its work in harmonizing and simplifying business processes. On the joint United Nations system service facility in Brasilia, delegations expressed the view that it was important to underline the pilot nature of the initiative and await its conclusion before assessing whether it would generate savings from increased efficiencies and reduced transaction costs. A delegation requested information on the organizations that were part of the joint service centre. Clarification was sought as to whether CEB had made an effort to simplify country-level programme delivery, not just administrative services, which could also save money and increase impact in receiving communities. With respect to the new

vendor registration system, several delegations expressed appreciation for CEB efforts to increase access to procurement opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition and looked forward to learning more about results achieved by the initiative in the following annual overview report. Progress on the implementation of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards was noted. Clarification was also sought on the nature of the CEB role related to rates for short-term staff performing interpretation and translation functions.

16. Delegations observed that the strategic plans adopted by the High-level Committee on Management and undg formed a sound basis for a results-oriented approach to coordination. A delegation asked about the alignment of the time frame of the strategic plans (2013-2016) with that of the strategic framework cycle. More information was requested on how the Board planned to respond to increased complexity, resource scarcity and other long-term trends in the United Nations operating environment.

17. Several delegations expressed appreciation for improvements made to the CEB website, in particular in the presentation of United Nations system statistics. An enquiry was made about the membership of CEB and its subsidiary bodies. Delegations welcomed the continued cooperation between CEB and the other jointly financed bodies.

Conclusions and recommendations

18. **The Committee noted the contributions of CEB in 2013 in contributing to the enhancement of United Nations system-wide coherence and coordination in policy, operational and management matters.**

19. **In particular, the Committee welcomed intensified efforts by CEB on system-wide preparation and follow-up of major United Nations conferences, as well as, inter alia, work to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals through its High-level Committee on Programmes and an active approach in support of country-level efforts in order to achieve tangible results.**

20. **The Committee recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/292 of 24 July 2013, had invited the Secretary-General, in his capacity as CEB Chair, to support a coordinated approach on multilingualism within the United Nations system. Stressing the importance of early action in the implementation of that resolution, the Committee recommended that the Assembly request the Board to provide information on its implementation and to report on future progress in its upcoming reports to the Committee.**

21. **The Committee recognized the continuous work of CEB on the harmonization and simplification of business practices and welcomed the opportunities of generating efficiencies by reducing administrative and procedural burdens, aiming at increasing the coherence, coordination, effectiveness, accountability and credibility of the United Nations system. In that regard, the Committee requested that it be informed of future progress and recommended that the General Assembly bring to the attention of the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, the need to continue addressing this issue.**

22. The Committee took note of the establishment of an integrated business service centre and of the launch of a joint United Nations system service facility in Brasilia and emphasized that the results of such initiatives in terms of efficiency and costs were yet to be determined.
23. The Committee welcomed the work of CEB on the implementation of good practices in performance management. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, through the High-level Committee on Management, to share examples of good experiences and lessons learned with the human resources directors of member organizations.
24. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to promote among the funds and programmes, as well as specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system, the continuation of mainstreaming support for South-South cooperation into the regular country-level programming of operational activities for development.
25. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request CEB to report on the results achieved by the new vendor registration system with regard to increasing the participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the procurement processes of the United Nations system in accordance with existing rules and regulations.
26. The Committee emphasized the key role to be played by CEB in ensuring coordinated United Nations system-wide support in the preparation of and follow-up to the post-2015 development agenda, in accordance with relevant intergovernmental mandates. For this purpose, the Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to include in the annual report of CEB to the Committee at its fifty-fifth session information on ways and means for strengthening that role to foster policy coherence in the United Nations system in order to ensure coordinated and effective action on the wide range of programmatic, management and operational issues linked to that global agenda.
27. The Committee took note of paragraph 16 of the report and, in that context, recalled paragraph 20 of General Assembly resolution 68/6, related to the beginning of the process for the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and, in that regard, reiterated the need for CEB to respect the relevant intergovernmental decisions during the preparation of the post-2015 development agenda.
28. The Committee noted the reference to the rule of law in paragraph 17 of the report and, in that context, recalled that the three main pillars of the United Nations were peace and security, development and human rights.
29. The Committee reiterated its recommendations to the General Assembly to bring to the attention of the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, the following concerns:

- (a) The need to ensure that the Board's activities and initiatives, including those related to system-wide coherence, were in line with intergovernmental mandates;

(b) The need to ensure enhanced alignment of the measures of the High-level Committee on Management with the existing United Nations legislative framework, including in the area of procurement.

30. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, to continue the direct and substantive dialogue between CEB and Member States, in accordance with paragraph 4 of its resolution 64/289, in order to further enhance and strengthen the Board's transparency and accountability to Member States.
